

Message Text

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ACTION EB-03

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 SAM-01 PRS-01 IO-04 INR-05

INRE-00 CIAE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SP-02 SSO-00 CCO-00

/044 W

----- 076166

Z R 011552Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY OSLO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 8914

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 4874

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS/ ENRG, NO

SUBJECT: PRESS REPORTS KISSINGER-FRYDENLUND DEAL ON ECG-
POSSIBLE NOON PRESS BRIEFING QUESTION

1. OSLO DAILY NEWSPAPER VERDENS GANG PUBLISHED
TODAY ARTICLE STATING THAT NORWEGIAN FOREIGN
MINISTER KNUT FRYDENLUND PROMISED SECRETARY
KISSINGER EARLY THIS FALL AT UN THAT HE WOULD
HOLD OFF UNTIL OCTOBER 29 BEFORE ANNOUNCING
NORWAY'S DECISION NOT TO SEEK ECG MEMBERSHIP
IN ORDER THAT OTHER GOVERNMENTS WOULD NOT
GET COLD FEET ON THEIR OWN MEMBERSHIP.

2. ARTICLE SAID THAT GOVERNMENT HAD MADE ITS
DECISION ON ECG REJECTION SOME TIME AGO, AND THAT
RECENT GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES THAT DECISION WAS
UNDER SERIOUS REVIEW AND THAT MATTER WAS BEING
FULLY CONSIDERED WITH PARLIAMENT WAS GOVERNMENT
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PLAY ACTING.

3. ADDITIONALLY ARTICLE SAYS NORWEGIAN RADIO-TV BROADCASTING (NRK) PLANNED TO CARRY STORY ON THIS ALLEGED FRYDENLUND-KISSINGER "SECRET DEAL" ON OCTOBER 31 EVENING NEWS AND THROUGH LABOR PARTY COLLEAGUE, NRK DIRECTOR TOROLF ELSTER, FRYDENLUND HAD THE NEWS ACCOUNT SUPPRESSED.

4. THIS AFTERNOON FOREIGN MINISTRY ISSUED FOLLOWING STATEMENT ON NEWS ARTICLE:

"IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION FROM THE NORWEGIAN NEWS AGENCY (NTB) THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS MR. KNUT FRYDENLUND DECLARES THAT NO AGREEMENT HAS BEEN CONCLUDED BETWEEN HIMSELF AND THE U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE TO THE EFFECT THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT PUBLISH ITS STANDPOINT ON MEMBERSHIP OF THE ECG BEFORE THE OTHER COUNTRIES CONCERNED HAD ANNOUNCED THEIR RESPECTIVE DECISIONS. AT THE TIME WHEN THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND THE U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE TOOK PLACE THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT HAD NOT YET DECIDED ON ITS STANDPOINT REGARDING THE QUESTION OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE ECG."
"IT IS QUITE A DIFFERENT MATTER THAT, WHILE THE SUBJECT WAS UNDER DISCUSSION, THE GOVERNMENT CONSIDERED IT OF IMPORTANCE TO PROCEED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO AVOID CAUSING COMPLICATIONS FOR THE OTHER COUNTRIES' DECISIONS ON THE SUBJECT."

5. THE STORY IS VERY LIKELY TO CAUSE FRYDENLUND AND THE GOVERNMENT SERIOUS EMBARRASSMENT. LABOR HAS BEEN UNDER CRITICISM FOR ITS DECISIONS ON AND HANDLING OF SEVERAL FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES RECENTLY, MOST NOTABLY THE ECG AND PLO (OSLO 4857). IN WHAT IS DEVELOPING AS A QUIET STARTING SESSION THIS CASE COULD ASSUME LARGER POLITICAL PROPORTIONS PUTTING THE GOVERNMENT AND THE FOREIGN CONFIDENTIAL

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MINISTER IN VERY UNCOMFORTABLE POSITIONS.

6. SINCE ISSUE COULD WELL BE SOURCE OF QUESTION FOR DEPARTMENT'S NOON PRESS BRIEFING, EMBASSY SUGGESTS THAT SINCE PRINCIPAL IMMEDIATE ALLEGATION AFFECTING U.S. HINGES ON DISCUSSION BETWEEN SECRETARY AND FOREIGN MINISTER DEPARTMENT MAY WISH, IF ASKED, TO REFER TO FRYDENLUND'S

STATEMENT (COMMENT: WHICH WE BELIEVE IS
ACCURATE AS FAR AS IT GOES.) IF FURTHER COMMENT
BY DEPARTMENT IS REQUIRED IT MAY BE POINTED
OUT THAT THE U.S. WAS CERTAINLY NOT UNDER THE
IMPRESSION THAT NORWAY HAD MADE FIRM DECISION
TO REJECT ECG MEMBERSHIP SINCE U.S. WAS UP TO
VERY RECENT DAYS SEEKING TO ENCOURAGE NORWAY
TO JOIN PROGRAM AS FULL MEMBER.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, ECONOMIC COOPERATION, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974OSLO04874
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740313-0380
From: OSLO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741179/aaaacpdh.tel
Line Count: 124
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 APR 2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <07-Aug-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS REPORTS KISSINGER-FRYDENLUND DEAL ON ECG- POSSIBLE NOON PRESS BRIEFING QUESTION
TAGS: ENRG, NO, ECG, (KISSINGER, HENRY A)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005